

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 11.05	Paul Parent Garden Club News	February 3, 2011
	FEATURED QUOTE : "When the world wearies and society fails to satisfy, There is always the garden." ~Minnie Aumonier	Gifts for the Gardener Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!
		Contact Information:
<p>The perfect gift for your favorite gardener on Valentine's Day! Gardens require planning and cultivation, yielding beauty and joy. This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy, and is autographed personally by Paul! The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder. Includes free delivery!</p>		E-Mail: Click to contact us.
Also included:		Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)
• 8 tabbed sections		Fax: (207) 985-6972
• 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...		Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043
• Weather records page		Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM
• 6 three year journal pages		Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?
• Insect & diseases page - 3 project pages		Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.
• 3 annual checklist pages		A Customized Gardening Tour of Ireland
• Plant wish list page		Join us for a journey to the beautiful gardens of the Emerald Isle.
• 2 large pocket pages		Click here for more information.
• Sheet of garden labels		Have a Look Around Our Website: 
• 5 garden detail sheets		
• 5 graph paper pages for layouts		
• 5 photo pages, each holding four 4x6 photos in landscape or portrait format		
<p style="text-align: center;">Click here to order online.</p> 		
<p>As you try to look out the window this week for the arrival of spring, do not get discouraged with all the ice and snow on the ground. The woodchuck from Pennsylvania did not see his shadow because of the snow falling on Wednesday, and that means that spring is on the way. Three cheers for us: Hip, Hip, Hooray!!!</p> <p>Just remember that all this snow cover will protect our roses, groundcovers, broadleaf evergreens, and hydrangeas from winter damage. On the other hand, if we do not get sunshine soon we will all go crazy, we will not care about the weather, and we will all be singing, "They are coming to take me away, ho, ho, hee, hee, ha, ha. To the funny farm. Where life is beautiful all the time..." Look at the seed catalogs and wait it out--it's coming! Think Positive. You will be mowing the lawn before you know it.</p> <p>When the snow melts, let's plant some late winter-flowering shrubs that begin blooming during February, so we will have something to look forward for next winter if the snow gets as deep as this winter. Look for the following shrubs at your local nursery this spring or have them order them for you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cornelian cherry/ winter-flowering dogwood (<i>Cornus mas</i>)• Winter heather/winter heath		

- Chinese Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis mollis*).
- Oregon Grape Holly (*Mahonia aquifolium*)
- Rhododendron mucronulatum 'Cornell Pink'

Cornelian cherry is a zone 4 plant that will tolerate 20° to 30° below. A member of the dogwood family, this plant will make clusters of bright yellow flowers during February. The flowers are frost proof and slightly scented. The plant is more shrub-like than the spring-flowering dogwoods we know. During the summer, bright red fruits, like cherries, will form where the flowers were during the winter and you can pick them to make jam or leave them to feed the birds.

Winter heath and heather grow all over southern New England, and as the snow begins to melt, it is not uncommon to see them in bloom during late February. Some varieties will flower from January to March, depending on the snow cover. Look for bell-shaped flowers that will be white, pink, or purple, with evergreen foliage. These plants will grow 8 to 12 inches tall and up to 18 inches wide.

Chinese witch hazel is hardy as far north as Maine and New Hampshire and will flower starting in late February, even if there is snow on the ground. The plant will tolerate 20° to 30° below zero temperatures, making it a zone 4 plant. The flowers are bright yellow. When the sun is out, they are very noticeable but when the sun goes down, the flowers fold up and seem to disappear. The flowers are also fragrant and long lasting.

Oregon grape holly will begin to flower during late February, with clusters of spike-shaped yellow flowers that will last well into April. The flowers are lightly scented when temperatures are warm, and they sit on top of the evergreen foliage that resembles a holly leaf. The plant is in the Barberry family, not a true holly. Honey bees looking for early flowers love this plant and, if pollinated, the plant will make purple grape-like fruits that will last to the fall season.

Rhododendron mucronulatum is one of my favorite early spring plants; it will take 10° to 20° below zero temperatures. The plant is unusual for rhododendrons, as this plant will lose its foliage in the fall, making it not evergreen. Fall foliage is yellow-orange before it falls from the plant. The flowers open during late February, often with snow still on the ground, and last into late March. The flowers are clusters of pale pink petals that resemble the flowers on apple trees.

All these plants are available from your local nursery but are not carried by some, because they flower so early in the season that most of us do not visit the nursery at that time of the year to see them in bloom. If you go to the nursery to pick up your vegetable or flower garden seeds, soil, fertilizer, or bird food in the next couple of weeks ask them to order one or more of these plants for your garden.

If you're a casual observer of the garden at this time of the year these plants will help to change your attitude of winter gardening! Winter will be a time to stop and admire the splendor of winter flowering shrubs. Now, add plants to your yard that have berries on them during the winter like hollies, viburnum and alder. Also shrubs and trees with colorful bark and twigs that stand out with the white snow cover like willow, red twig dogwood, and birch. Think spring, but enjoy the garden during the winter months also. Spring is only 45 days away!!

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If you are looking to grow roses that you may receive during Valentine's Day in your garden, then consider moving to California. But if you want better roses than the florist can supply you, think about growing roses in your garden. It won't be easy, it will be a lot of work, but it is possible to have wonderful, fragrant roses from your own garden.

Here is what you will need. Choose a location in your yard that has sun all day long, not just part of the day—but all day! If that location is sheltered from the harsh winter winds, it would be a big plus for the rose bushes. Strong winds, especially during a winter with little to no snow cover, are rough on the plants because they are dry and the wind will rob the plant of moisture. If your chosen location is open, then be sure to build a mound of organic matter like bark mulch or top soil around the plant 12 to 18 inches high in the shape of an igloo in the late fall.

I also recommend that each fall you spray those roses with an anti-desiccant spray like Wilt-Pruf or Wilt-Stop to help seal in moisture in the stems before you cover the plant with organic matter. Also NEVER prune your roses back in the fall, always in the spring but—again--NEVER in the fall! If your roses are getting tall and you want to prune them back, it must be done in early September. This is possible while the plant is actively growing so the plant will be able to produce callouses on the area where you cut to seal the stem from the wind. Winter protection is a must if you want your roses to survive the winter season--or you could just wish for 3 feet of snow that will protect the plants with a blanket effect.

You have the location, now let us work on the soil. The better you prepare the area before you plant, the better they will grow for you. Remember that these plants will be in your garden for many years, so put the effort into the soil now for better plants in the future. Roses like a well-drained soil. If spring rains and winter ice build up in the soil around the roots, the plant will suffer and will not grow well. If you have a clay type soil, just blend a lot of organic matter like compost, peat moss, animal manure, and coarse sharp sand to break up the clay. Yearly applications of a garden gypsum like Soil Logic Liquid Gypsum will help break up the clay particles.

Once the roses are planted, be sure to cover the ground with organic matter like bark mulch, compost, pine needles, or peat moss. This will keep out weeds, hold the heat in the ground longer in the fall season, keep moisture in the ground longer during the hot days of summer, and help to protect the roots of the plant during the winter by keeping it frozen once it does freeze. Stay away

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from stone mulches, as they will heat up the ground during hot weather, increasing the need to water.

Water is important to roses and they will need 1 to 2 inches of water a week during the summer. If water supply is not adequate, the plant will not develop as quickly and the number of flowers will be less. Watering roses is important, but not as important as how you water them! If you can put the water around the plant without wetting the foliage, your disease problems will be cut back a great deal. Never use a sprinkler system that applies water overhead or a sprinkler attached to your hose to water plants. Take off the nozzle and let the water run on the ground between plants or better still lay a drip hose on the ground around the plants before you cover the plants with mulch.

Fertilizer is also important and roses love to be fed regularly. Feed them every month with a granular food designed for roses or a liquid food every two weeks. Fertilizer is applied in early April and this should continue until September first. NO fertilizer after September first, because you want the plant to prepare itself for the winter--and if you feed it, the plant will continue to make new growth. You want the plant to stop growing and begin to thicken the stems, bark and tissue to help prevent wind damage during the winter.

Insect and disease problems come to your garden when you plant roses, but you can minimize the problems if you plan ahead. Gardening companies like Bonide Lawn and Garden, Ortho, and Bayer Advance have wonderful products to help control these problems. Set up a prevention program early in the spring and keep on it during the growing season to minimize problems.

Now get yourself a good book on roses, read it during these snowy days and begin to select the roses you would like in your garden. Think, hardiness, resistance to problems, fragrance, color, and--most of all--repeating blooms. Enjoy.

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Hoya/Porcelain Flower/Wax Vine

If you're looking for a fast growing, vining plant for a west window, I have the perfect plant for you. Yes I mean a west window--with bright light all day and direct sunshine at the end of the day--is perfect for the Hoya plant. Hoya is a wonderful flowering vine that will not tolerate direct sunshine during midday. Direct midday summer sunshine will scorch the foliage like sunburn and it will turn white and fall from the plant quickly.

Hoya was originally found in Burma and central China growing wild as a vine on the edge of wooded areas. In the wild, it is a vigorous climbing vine with fleshy thick foliage that will twine up most anything--but it also loves to dangle its branches over the edge of containers.

Hoya is in a group of plants called Asclepiadoideae, the Milkweed family. When your wild milkweed plant comes into bloom in the summer, look at the flower on the plant, as it resembles the hoyo plant closely. Hoya, however, does not make the soft fluffy pods that form the seeds that are ejected into the air and float all over your yard in the fall.

The foliage of the hoyo is oval shaped, with a blunt point on the tip. The foliage will grow one to two inches long and one inch wide. The foliage color varies depending on the plant variety. Most are medium to dark green in color, some have a silvery tinge to them, and variegated types with white edges on the foliage are commonly available. But if you want something unusual, look for the twisted or curly leaf varieties and you will enjoy foliage that is rippled and curls under itself--just beautiful.

This plant loves a warm location to grow in, with summer temperatures 70 degrees plus. During the winter ,temperature should be 10 degrees cooler to give it time to rest. Growing near a window is perfect location because the cold winter temperatures will provide cooler temperatures near the glass. Drafty windows could chill the plant and they will not tolerate this, so check windows before placing the plant there. Hoya *does not* like to be moved once it is placed in the window, as it takes time for the plant to adapt to the location, so have patience as it adjusts.

During the summer, water moderately but give the plant time to dry up a bit between waterings, as soggy soil will rot the roots, causing the foliage to wrinkle up and fall. Always allow the surface of the soil to dry up between waterings. The rest of the year, water less often, especially during the winter months when you want to water just enough to prevent the soil from drying out completely. Misting the foliage will help the plant thrive and prosper if you heat your home with forced hot air or use a wood stove. If the plant is in bloom, do not mist the flowers or they will rot and fall from the plant.

Fertilize from May to September and then NOTHING during the winter months! If you fertilize too often the plant will make just foliage and no flowers. If the plant is growing vigorously and looks lush, feed less often. During the growing season, once a month is all that is needed for good growth. Use a well-balanced fertilizer like Miracle-Gro or Neptune Harvest and stay away from high-potash liquid feed. Potash is the third number on the package of fertilizer.

The flower heads are unusual looking and are produced from the tip of the vine during the summer. The flower is a cluster of up to ten starry-shaped, waxy, white flowers that have a pink five

point center. The flower looks shiny and firm to touch. The flower cluster is heavy and it will hang down from the vine, so if you want to enjoy the flowers, be sure to grow them in a hanging basket. You can also grow them on a wire frame or a wire wreath ring if hanging the plant is not possible, but you will have to train the plant and secure it to the structure with twine.

The flowers are sweet-smelling when in bloom, and some of the new varieties will have a strong fragrance that will fill your room with a perfume scent. Often, if the plant loves the growing conditions in your home, the flower will produce drops of sticky nectar. When the plant is in bud, never move the plant even to clean the window--or the buds will fall.

While in college, I was taught that if you trained the plant to grow horizontally, it would help the plant to flower better and earlier. A hormone called Florigin produced by the plant must accumulate in these horizontal growing stems to make flowers. Also do not remove the faded flowers; let them fall by themselves, as they will flower from the same spurs next year and you could damage the spur. Enjoy!

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Join Paul Parent for a garden tour of the Emerald Isle! Note--we are looking for a single female to share a room with a fellow female traveler and save over \$400.00 as roommate.

Tour includes the Cliffs of Moher, Connemara National Park, Brigit's Garden, Muckross Gardens, Bantry House & Gardens, Kilravock Garden, Garnish Island, Annes Grove Garden, Lakemount Gardens, Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre, Heywood Gardens, Powerscourt Gardens, Dublin Castle, Dillon Gardens and much more.

[Click here for details.](#)

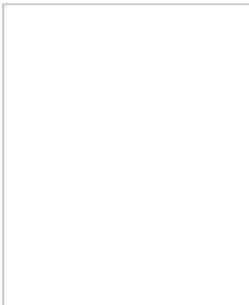


This Week's Question:

Who created the first mass-produced Valentine's Day cards?

[Click Here to Answer](#)

This Week's Prize: *Healthy Garden, Healthy You*, by Milo Shammass



Milo takes us through a storytelling journey of soil health, plant health, animal health and how they directly relate to human health.

BONUS: 100 easy-to-grow plants, their growing instructions, and their direct human health benefits and disease prevention properties.



Last Week's Question:

The fuchsia was named after Leonhart Fuchs. The man who did the naming also has a genus of flowering plants named after him. Who was he?

Last Week's Winner:

Ann Jones

Last Week's Answer:

Charles Plumier (who had the genus Plumeria named after him).

Last Week's Prize:

Healthy Garden, Healthy You, by Milo Shammass

One winner per question - we choose winners from the list of those who answer correctly. Winners must be newsletter subscribers. We'll ship you your prize, so be sure to put your address in the form in case you win!



Featured Recipe: Slow Cooker French Dip

What You'll Need:

- 4 pounds rump roast (make sure it will fit in your crockpot)
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can beef broth
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can condensed French onion soup
- 1 (12 ounce) can or bottle **dark** beer (stout recommended)
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder (or to taste)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 6 French or hoagie rolls
- Approx. 2 tablespoons butter
- Optional: sliced provolone cheese

Step by Step:

- Trim any excess fat from the rump roast, and place in a slow cooker.
- Add the broth, onion soup, garlic powder, salt, pepper and beer (tip: if you don't have stout or want a deeper flavor, add some browning sauce--like Kitchen Bouquet).
- Cook on low for 8 hours. (Cooking time may vary depending on crockpot.)
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Split the rolls, and spread with butter (and/or cheese).
- Bake until heated through and cheese is melted.
- Slice the meat on the diagonal, and place on the rolls.
- Put sauce in bowls for dipping.

Serves 6



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